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regard of mankind since the death of William the Silent. From the fact of his having ascended the throne of England, and inaugurated a new state of things in our mother country, his life and character are more generally known than those of the great antagonist of Philip. This may be also owing in some degree to a difference in the manner in which the two Williams achieved their triumphs. The king was often in the field, and it is the soldier of all the characters of history who suggests to us the most vivid idea. The Prince is more withdrawn from our eyes. We do not often hear the ring of his armor, nor meet his penetrating glance. He seems to us rather like the man concealed in the automaton chess-player. We do not see him, but he is close at hand, watching all the changes of the complicated game, and directing its moves with such sagacious accuracy that he is seldom beaten. It is difficult to make an impartial comparison between the two, on closing a book in which the life of one is depicted by a master hand; but upon the whole it seems to us that the first William was a greater man than his great-grandson and namesake. However this may be, we close the story of his life with the conviction that Mr. Motley's History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic is a most valuable contribution to history and letters, a work in every way worthy of its majestic theme, and one that every American may be proud to own as written by his countryman.

- ART. XI.—1. *Memoir of THOMAS HANDASYD PERKINS; containing Extracts from his Diaries and Letters. With an Appendix.* By THOMAS G. CARY. Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1856. 8vo. pp. 304.
2. *Lives of Eminent Merchants.* By FREEMAN HUNT, A. M., Editor of the Merchant's Magazine. Vol. I. New York. 1856. pp. 576.

COMMERCE is now the chief estate, the controlling power, the paramount interest, of the civilized world, and its compar-

ative ascendancy in the several nations of Christendom might with little error be assumed as the type and gauge of their respective measures of civilization. Where the titular aristocracy refuses to recruit its leanness from the mercantile ranks, it has already fallen below them in respectability and influence; while, in England, nothing so tends to keep up the prestige of nobility as the various ways through which mercantile blood and wealth are perpetually renewing the vitality and repairing the wasted substance of the titled orders. In this country, commerce is at the North unrivalled in position and power; in the South, in proportion to their relative numerical forces, it is a competitor on more than equal terms with the proprietary aristocracy. To a larger degree than is generally conceived, it holds or bestows the chief places in society, and in all portions of the public administration not immediately depending on the national executive. Nor is this condition of things in any sense a plutocracy; it indicates the preponderant weight of the mercantile mind and character. Commerce is emphatically a liberal profession, both in the prerequisites for success in it and in the training which it gives. It was not always so. Until the present century, its routes, modes, and customs were liable to but slight and slow changes, its competitions were by no means active, and its individual branches might be pursued by men who had neither genius nor culture. But now the merchant must throw his feelers out to every zone and shore, must maintain converse with the courts and markets, the wars and negotiations, the resources and alliances of every nation, and must be able to translate every flash of intelligence borne on the speaking wires into the dialect of the exchange. Yet more, he must be endowed with keen foresight; for his success will often depend on his deductions from slight, or ambiguous, or complicated premises. Nor in such a case can he, like an adroit politician, save his reputation by being obscure and oracular; but his predictions are uttered in a form in which none can misread them, or fail to compare them with their issue.

Thomas Handasyd Perkins holds a pioneer's place with reference to the mercantile profession as it now is in New England. Brought up under the old *régime*, he was the founder

and for many years the leading mind of the new. There was no little of heroism in his early career; for, in repeated instances, he followed no precedent, but trusted his fortunes to the sole, and as it proved unerring, instinct of his own mercantile genius, exploring new directions of enterprise, opening untried avenues of intercourse, and mining fresh veins of hidden wealth.

He was born in Boston in 1764. His father was a merchant, and his mother, who survived her husband for thirty-six years, continued his business with eminent skill, prudence, and success, at the same time discharging all a mother's duties for her numerous family, and filling a large and honored place in connection with the charitable associations of her native town. He was prepared for college under the tuition of Rev. Dr. Shute of Hingham; but, preferring a more active life, he was placed in the counting-room of the Messrs. Shattuck, then among the principal merchants of Boston, and remained with them till he was of age. Shortly afterward, he entered into partnership with his elder brother, in St. Domingo; but finding the climate uncongenial, he soon returned to Boston, and for some time attended to the business of the house in the United States. In 1789, his attention was first turned to the East Indies, and he undertook, as supercargo, a voyage to Batavia and Canton. His memoranda of his residence in Java form an important portion of Mr. Cary's Memoir, and, in the paucity of information of that date with reference to the island and its inhabitants, they have even a high historical value. His business and that of the firm of J. & T. H. Perkins, formed after the St. Domingo insurrection in 1792, had thenceforward China and the northwest coast of America for their most important and lucrative directions; and the brothers eventually established a house at Canton. But their operations extended also to almost every quarter of the world then open to American commerce.

In 1794 Mr. Perkins took passage for Bordeaux, with a cargo of provisions, in a ship belonging to his own firm and that of S. Higginson & Co., of which his younger brother was a member. He was in France during some of the most exciting and sanguinary scenes of the French Revolution, and,

having sold most of his cargo to the government, was obliged to reside for several months in Paris, in the endeavor to secure payment from the appropriate bureau. He witnessed the execution of Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser during the ascendancy of "The Mountain," and of five judges and ten jurymen who had aided him in the mock-legal forms by which multitudes of innocent victims had been murdered. While here, he was enabled to perform for the Marquis de La Fayette an important service, the details of which are related as follows in an autobiographical sketch prepared for his family:—

"Mr. Monroe, the minister of the United States, told me that he wished a service to be rendered by some one, and felt great interest that I should give my aid to it. The object was that I should aid in sending Mr. George Washington La Fayette to the United States. His mother, the Marchioness La Fayette, was then in Paris with her daughters, and Mr. Frestal, their tutor. Mr. Monroe gave me a letter to her; and I found her lodged in the third story, in the Rue de l'Arbre Sec. She explained her object to me, which was to get her son sent to the United States, to prevent him from being drawn by the conscription into the army. He was then fourteen years of age. The proposal she made to me was, that I should apply to the Convention for permission to procure a passport for her son to go to America, for the purpose of his being educated in a counting-house. As the Marquis was in bad odor in France, it was deemed necessary to sink the real name of the party, and to apply to the Committee of Safety for a passport for G. W. Motier, this being a name of his family which he had a right to assume. Madame La Fayette was intimately acquainted with Boissy d'Anglas, the president of the committee, and one of the old aristocracy of France; and from him she had assurance, that, if the application were made by an American, it would be favorably received. The Marquis was at the time prisoner in the castle of Olmutz, in Austria; and the object of Madame was to go to him with her daughters, and solace him in his deplorable confinement, where his health was suffering.

"The application to the committee was complied with; and my friend Mr. Russell, who took an active part in aiding in the plan, accompanied George La Fayette to Havre, where was an American ship in which I had an interest, commanded by Capt. Thomas Sturgis, brother to Mr. R. Sturgis, who married my eldest sister. To him I gave letters, requesting that Mr. La Fayette might have a passage in the ship, which

was freely accorded. Mr. Russell and myself paid the expense of the journey and the passage; and Mr. La Fayette arrived in Boston, where he was cordially received by my family, and passed some time there. He afterwards went to Mount Vernon, and lived in the family of General Washington, until, in the following year, he returned to Europe, when he entered the Revolutionary army.

“He served with reputation; but, as the name was not a favorite one with the existing leaders, he was kept in the background by the influence of General Bonaparte; and retired, after a year or two of service, to private life. He is yet living (1846), and has been a member of the House of Deputies since the fall of Bonaparte.

“Madame La Fayette went to Austria, and remained with her husband to the time of his liberation. Immediately after his being set at liberty, he wrote me a letter, dated at Olmutz, thanking me for the share I had taken in enabling his wife to visit him in his distress, and declaring that I had been the means of saving his life by the means used in restoring his family to him. This letter is now in the possession of Mrs. Bates, of London, to whom I gave it as an interesting article for her portfolio.” — pp. 57 – 59.

During Mr. Perkins’s detention on the Continent, he made a tour through the interior of France, and the principal cities of Holland. On his return to Paris, he was present at the important trial described in the following extract from his diary, bearing date June 16, 1795: —

“We are informed this day that the trial of the eight deputies of the National Convention, who were decreed of accusation by their colleagues, as promoters of the disturbances of the 1st of Prairial, is to come on before the Military Commission. This court has been established since the Revolutionary Tribunal was abolished. It is neither more nor less than a court-martial, and is composed of eight officers of rank. They have had the trial of all those persons who have been arrested as concerned in the attempt against the Convention, many of whom they have sent to expiate their crime at the guillotine.

“The name of the Revolutionary Tribunal has been detested throughout this country; for it has condemned all the martyrs who have suffered in the cause of liberty through the influence of Robespierre; and, indeed, all who suffered by the guillotine had their mock trial at this bar. The last trials before this tribunal were those of its former judges, jurors, and attorney-general; who were tried for the crimes they had committed while in office, and condemned to die for their unheard-of cruelties by the same machine to which they had condemned thousands.

This was esteemed the most just thing that was ever done by this tribunal; and with it ended its existence, a short time previous to the insurrection of the *faubourgs*. As there was no criminal court established, the Military Commission was created, for the purpose of trying those concerned in that affair. It is held in the house of an emigrant, which can hold but few persons. We found a large body of people waiting, and very much feared we should not gain admittance; but Mr. Russell, having an ambassador's ticket of entrance to the National Assembly, obtained permission for us to enter. We were introduced into the room where the court sat, which was capable of holding about sixty or seventy spectators. The names of the members who were accused were Bourbotte, Rhull, Romme, Goujon, Du Roy, Forestier, Dusquesnoy, Soubrany, and Peyssard. Rhull, unable to undergo a trial which he supposed would be but a prelude to his death on the scaffold, put an end to his existence the day before yesterday. When we entered, we found Bourbotte before the court. He was seated in the centre of that part of the room occupied by the court, and was guarded on each side by a soldier, who held a drawn sword in his hand. The judges were dressed in their regimentals. Three or four of them showed by their uniform that they were general officers; and seemed, from their conduct, to have some fellow-feeling for the unfortunate men who were arraigned before them. There were eight sentinels in the room; and everything looked martial. There was also a body of troops in the court-yard below. Bourbotte is a very handsome, well-made man, of about thirty-five years of age. He was accused of being one of the members of the Convention, who, on the night of the 1st of Prairial (or 22d of May last), made some of the motions upon which certain decrees were passed by the few members who remained in the hall of the Convention. One of his motions is said to have been for the immediate arrest of the members of the Committee of Public Safety and General Surety. He denies this; but there is a person who has proved that he was in one of the tribunes, and that he himself heard him make the motion, and second others equally *anti-modéré*. He was asked by the president of the court-martial if he had any observations to make upon the evidence of the person who had been giving his deposition; and answered, that he had nothing more to say than he had before said in answer to the interrogations which had been put to him. Everything that is deposed by a witness, or answered in defence by the prisoner, is taken down by a secretary, as the one or the other speaks; so that the prisoner speaks as many words as he supposes the secretary can remember, who writes them down, and then goes on with all he has to say. When the prisoner has finished, it is read to him, that he may

agree to its being what he uttered ; after which, he signs it, as confirmation of its validity. I should have supposed, that, uttering in this way perhaps half a sentence at a time, one would lose the thread of the defence, and would labor under a great disadvantage. This, however, was not the case in any instance this day, that I remember, as respected those on trial. The witnesses appeared much less cool and collected than those whom they accused, and made several mistakes in keeping the thread of their testimony. The prisoner had his snuff-box, which he carelessly twirled betwixt his thumb and finger, occasionally taking from it a pinch of snuff. He showed not the smallest signs of fear ; although he must be sensible, and undoubtedly is so, that in three or four days the thread of his existence will be cut. The evidence is very full against him, and nothing can save him.

“The witness deposed, among other things, that he heard the prisoner say that he had just come from a coffee-house in the neighborhood, and that he had taken there several glasses of wine ; and, from the warmth of his expressions, he (the witness) supposed him to be intoxicated. The prisoner smiled, but answered nothing.

“Forestier is an old man, and the charges against him are light ; and I am of opinion that he will not be found guilty.

“The witness who was examined respecting Du Roy, Romme, and Goujon, testified that he saw three of the members (describing them according to their dress and appearance) very warmly taking a part in the Convention in forming the decrees which were made on that memorable night. The prisoners were severally called in ; and the witness said they were the persons he alluded to. They observed, that, in such a situation as the witness was in, and in the tumults of that night, it could not be possible for him to be certain of the identity of their persons. This idea seemed to me to be rational enough ; but the rest of the audience smiled at the idea. They all answered, upon being asked if they had any further defence to make, that their answers to the interrogatories put by the court were their defence ; and they said not much to the witnesses who were examined.

“These members are all of what is called the Mountain party in the Convention. This is another name for Jacobin ; and therefore all Paris is against them, since the Convention (that is to say, the *Modérés*) have got the day. How it would have been had the *faubourgs* got the upper hand, there is no knowing. Goujon is quite a young man. One of the witnesses deposed that he heard him speak with a great deal of warmth on the night of the 1st ; on hearing which, Goujon asked, with a smile of indignation, what member of sensibility there was who would not show warmth on such a night as that. He seems a very intelligent

young man, of about twenty-six or twenty-eight. If his fate is to be a guillotine, Mr. Russell and I are of opinion he will meet it like a man. Indeed, they all show an astonishing degree of coolness and reconciliation to the fate that awaits them, particularly Bourbotte, who, as he left the room, bowed and smiled upon several persons, who were, I suppose, some of his acquaintance. There is one thing respecting this trial which I cannot think quite right. When these men were decreed of accusation, and ordered to be tried by the Military Commission, they called upon several members of the Convention as witnesses in their favor. The court referred the propriety of calling the members of that body, who had been their accusers, as witnesses; and the Convention, after discussing the point, agreed that the court were competent to determine everything of that kind, and passed to the order of the day. The fact is, the members were not called! Had there been a question of calling any of the members of that body, who accused the prisoners, in behalf of the government, it would not have been right; but that they should deny this privilege to the accused, seems to me extraordinary. The judge informed us, at about half past three, that the court would be opened again the next day at twelve o'clock. As I was going out, the officer who conducted us to the chamber told me, that, if I wished to see them receive sentence, I must come by eleven o'clock to-morrow. There seems to be no doubt in the minds of the people how this business will terminate; and I dare say they would not be insured from the axe of the law for ninety-nine per cent. Romme appeared to me to be the only one who had fear marked upon his countenance. He is very obnoxious to the reigning party; and they will rejoice at his fate, should it be execution on the Place de la Révolution. If possible, I shall go to the commission to-morrow." — pp. 165–171.

On leaving France, Mr. Perkins visited London, and spent several weeks in England; but the facilities of travel, though superior to those on the Continent, were not such as to invite extensive journeying; the roads were infested by highwaymen; and he confined himself to the southern part of the island. He still continued the diary from which we have already quoted, and put on record many details, which enable the reader to estimate the changes that have occurred during the sixty most eventful and most progressive years of modern history. Did our limits permit, we should be glad to quote the narrative of his visit to Newgate, which had for several years been the model prison of the time, and bore many then recent tokens of the humane philanthropy of Howard.

The journal and reminiscences connected with this voyage and European residence occupy about half of the volume under review, and they constitute a narrative of rare interest and value. The writer's position as an acknowledged, yet deferred, and therefore somewhat privileged creditor, of the then existing government of France, and the favor with which he was regarded as an American, secured for him a near view of passing events and their prominent actors; while his keen powers of observation, his calm good sense and stable principles, assure us of the literal authenticity of his rendering of facts, and of the genuineness of the moral sentiments expressed in connection with them.

The European journal is followed in the Memoir by a narrative in his own words, which could never have been read with more interest than now that the filial piety of our generation is busy in rescuing from oblivion all attainable memorials of him, whose common paternity remains almost the only recognized bond of our national union.

"The circumstance of my interference in sending young La Fayette to this country was the cause of one of the most interesting events of my life. It was known to General Washington, through the father or son, or both, that I had been active in effecting the removal of the young man to this country; and, from the great partiality he had for the Marquis, he was pleased to regard the actors in a favorable light.

"In the summer of 1796, I visited the city of Washington, which was decided upon as the future seat of government, though Congress still sat at Philadelphia. While I was there, General Washington passed some days at the new seat of government. He lodged at the house of Mr. Peters, who married a Miss Custis, granddaughter of Mrs. Washington. At a ball given by Mrs. Peters, to which I was invited, I was introduced to the General by Colonel Lear, his private secretary, and was graciously received, and invited to visit Mount Vernon, and pass some time there. This was not to be declined; and, a few days after, I went, as invited, to pay my respects to the man I cherished in my mind beyond any earthly being. There was no company there except Mr. Thomas Porter, formerly of Boston, who then lived at Alexandria, with whom I was intimately acquainted, and who was a great favorite at Mount Vernon. He took me to the residence of General Washington, and returned after dinner to his own residence.

"It is well known that the General was not in the habit of talking on political subjects with any but those connected with him in the government. Indeed, he was what may be called a silent man, except when necessity called upon him to be otherwise. He conversed with me on internal improvements; and observed to me, that I should probably live to see an internal communication, by canals and rivers, from Georgia to Massachusetts. The State of Maine had not then been separated from the old Bay State. He little thought, at that time or ever, of the railroads which now span the country. General Washington, it is understood, was the first projector of the Dismal Swamp Canal, between Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound, in North Carolina, at that time a great undertaking, as well as the lockage of the Little Falls of the Potomac. As was before remarked, I was the only guest at Mount Vernon at the time spoken of. Mrs. Washington, and her granddaughter, Miss Nelly Custis, with the General, were the only inmates of the parlor.

"The situation of Mount Vernon is known to every one to be of surpassing beauty. It stands on the banks of the Potomac, but much elevated above the river, and affords an extensive view of this beautiful piece of water and of the opposite shore. At the back of the house, overlooking the river, is a wide piazza, which was the general resort in the afternoon. On one occasion, when sitting there with the family, a toad passed near to where I sat conversing with General Washington; which led him to ask me if I had ever observed this reptile swallow a fire-fly. Upon my answering in the negative, he told me that he had; and that, from the thinness of the skin of the toad, he had seen the light of the fire-fly after it had been swallowed. This was a new, and to me a surprising, fact in natural history.

"I need not remark how deeply I was interested in every word which fell from the lips of this great man. I found Mrs. Washington to be an extremely pleasant and unaffected lady, rather silent; but this was made up for by the facetious and pleasant young lady, Miss Custis, who afterwards married Major Lewis, a nephew of the General, and who is yet living. During the day, the General was either in his study, or in the saddle, overlooking the cultivation of his farm.

"I shall never forget a circumstance which took place on the first evening I lodged at Mount Vernon. As I have said before, it was in July, when the day trenched far upon the evening, and at seven or eight o'clock we were taking our tea; not long after which, the ladies retired. Knowing the habit of the General, when not prevented by business, to retire early, at about nine o'clock I made a movement in my chair; which led the General to ask me if I wished to retire to my

chamber. Upon my answering in the affirmative, observing there was no servant in the room, he took one of the candles from the table, leading the way to the great staircase; then gave me the candle, and pointed out to me the door at the head of the stairs as my sleeping-room. Think of this!

“In the room in which I laid myself down — for I do not think I slept at all, so much was I occupied with the occurrences of the day — was a portrait of La Fayette the elder, and, hanging over the fireplace, the *key of the Bastille*, which, I believe, retain the same places to this day. On the afternoon of the second day after I arrived, I took my leave of Mount Vernon, more gratified than I can express.

“In the autumn of the year of my visit, Mr. Stuart (Gilbert) painted the full-length portrait of the General, which is much the best likeness I have ever seen of him. The bust I have, also by Stuart, is a *fac-simile* of the original. The portrait of Mrs. Washington, also by Stuart, now in the Athenæum, is an excellent likeness of that excellent lady. I remember her amiable expression of countenance, and courteous, unaffected manner, as well at this time as half a century since.

“The President, having inquired of me if I had visited the Great Falls of the Potomac, and being answered in the negative, observed to me, that I ought not to leave that part of the country without visiting them. I made the excursion, though pressed for time, and to my great satisfaction.

“I consider the visit to Mount Vernon as one of the most interesting of my life. It was the only opportunity which I should have ever had of conversing familiarly with this great and good man. Two years after my visit, he died, at his residence, of croup. It is stated that he was not well treated for the disorder, and that with more skill his life might have been preserved; though I doubt if his happiness would have been preserved to him, had his life been spared. Detraction and calumny had assailed him.

“The new city of Washington, when I was there, had but few houses. The Capitol was not built for many years afterwards; and when Congress first sat there, it occupied, I think, a building erected by means of a tontine speculation, got up by a Mr. Blodget, who went from Massachusetts, and was well known as a great projector of speculations of one sort and another.” — pp. 197 – 201.

During the closing years of the last century and the earlier part of the present, Mr. Perkins was principally occupied in establishing and extending those branches of foreign commerce with which his name and family are so closely asso-

ciated in the general mind. The happy results to individual fortune and to the mercantile interests of New England, that may be directly or indirectly traced to the voyage of 1789, to which we have already referred, it would be impossible to overrate, and the estimate that would seem the most fabulous might be the least so. During the difficulties that preceded the war of 1812, his house still maintained its lucrative commerce with China, and at the same time engaged largely in the shipment of provisions to Spain and Portugal. In order to complete the pecuniary arrangements connected with this peninsular trade, Mr. Perkins took passage for London in the summer of 1811, and remained in England till the following spring. He then visited Paris, by the way of Morlaix, where he was detained for three weeks as a person devoted to the English interest, and therefore hostile and dangerous to the French government. While he was at Morlaix occurred the touching incident, to which reference was made in a former number by one of our contributors, but which we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of quoting, as modestly and gracefully told by himself in a letter to his wife. The statement by Mr. Cary which follows the letter is proof positive that the generous lodger not only started the subscription, but left no risk or doubt as to its completion.

“‘The family in which I lived was one of the most respectable in Morlaix, in point of property, previous to the Revolution. Like many others, it was reduced to very narrow means by the then existing state of things, as their wealth consisted principally in vessels, which either perished at the wharves, or were taken by the powers which then ruled, and were totally lost to Monsieur Beau, who was their proprietor. Having been the agent for the lead mines for a long time, this was a resource to him; and although the stipend arising from this was a moderate one, yet it served to feed his wife and children, who were some six or seven in number. M. Beau died a few years since, and left his widow without any resource for the support of her family. Being a woman of a good deal of character, the company to whom the mines belong concluded to continue the agency in the hands of Mrs. Beau, who, with the aid of her youngest son, has carried on the purchases and sales to this time. The two eldest sons got clerkships in the tobacco manufactory, and a daughter was married; so that but one daughter and one son were upon the shoulders of the old lady. Their means

were, to be sure, small; but their wants were few; and, although their whole income was not more than six hundred dollars per annum, the son who aided his mother in the lead-mine agency had made a matrimonial engagement; and, not believing that "Love would fly out of the window, though Poverty looked in at the door," a day was designated for the marriage; and I was invited as a guest at the meeting of the family, which was to take place in the evening. The marriage ceremony took place in the morning, at the parish church; and at about ten o'clock I was introduced to the bride, whom I found to be, as I had heard her represented, a beautiful woman of about twenty, with a very prepossessing countenance, which, it was universally acknowledged, was a perfect index of her amiable mind. She seemed perfectly happy; and nothing but joy was visible in every countenance in the family. All was happiness and gayety and laugh and frolic. Mark the sad change. At twelve o'clock, the bridegroom received notice that he had been drawn in the conscription; and that on *Sunday* he must be at Campège, a distance of thirty leagues. This was on Thursday. In such cases, entreaty is vain, and never resorted to, because always ineffectual. To go to the army was to *go*, to return when the exigencies of the state no longer required his services. The whole family was in a state little short of distraction when I left the town, which was early on the next morning. The lowest price at which a substitute could be procured was three thousand francs; and the family could not command half the money in all its branches. The peculiar situation of this family seemed to paralyze the whole town, and led to an exertion which is seldom made, and which proved effectual in preventing this young man from being torn from the embraces of his charming wife and amiable mother. I have the satisfaction of having put the thing in train, and shall always consider the opportunity as one of the most gratifying which ever presented itself to me. After my arrival in Paris, I received a letter, saying that my example had been followed, and that it had produced the effect desired. This is an anecdote, or rather this part of it, for your own private ear; and you will not, of course, show this letter.'

"Some years afterwards, he was again at Morlaix; and, as a proof of the affection and respect with which the remembrance of him was cherished, he found that the room which he had occupied at the time of this occurrence had been kept in the precise order in which he left it, no article having been removed from its place." — pp. 216–218.

In 1822, Mr. Perkins sustained a severe bereavement in the death of his elder brother and partner, whose life had been one

of eminent purity, probity, and benevolence, and whose name is imperishably associated with the Boston Athenæum by a munificent endowment in his lifetime, and with our University by an equally liberal bequest,—the foundation of the chair of which Professor Peirce is the present incumbent. Mr. Perkins for sixteen years after this event maintained his place as senior partner in the firm, which had owed its distinction and success so largely to his energy.

“After his retirement from commerce,” writes Mr. Cary, “Col. Perkins found sufficient occupation in the management of his property; in various matters of a public nature which interested him; and in the cultivation of trees, and particularly of fruits and flowers, on his estate at Brookline. He was remarkable for his love of nature; and, in travelling, sometimes went far out of his way to examine a beautiful tree or to enjoy an interesting view. Occasionally he made a voyage to Europe, renewing his observations on the changes and improvements that were to be seen there. He had crossed the Atlantic many times besides the instances that have been referred to, always keeping a diary, which he filled with the incidents that occurred, with the results of his inquiries, and with remarks worthy of an intelligent traveller, and sending home works of art, some of which were bestowed as gifts. He took a lively interest in the progress and welfare of American artists; kindly aiding some who desired to improve by studying the great models in Europe, and liberally purchasing the works of those who deserved encouragement.” — pp. 243, 244.

His bodily constitution seems to have been elastic rather than firm. Often reduced to alarming debility, he rose again to vigorous health with the excitement and pleasure of a journey, or the mere preparation for a voyage. When nearly ninety years of age, and much bowed by infirmity, he visited Washington on business; and, grieved to learn that labor on the monument to the memory of Washington was likely to be suspended for lack of funds, he on his return engaged with earnest alacrity in measures adapted to revive a fresh interest in the work, and was the efficient cause of a large subscription toward that enterprise in Boston and its vicinity. He had for many years been deprived of the use of one of his eyes by cataract, and early in 1853 he was threatened with total blindness by the rapid progress of the same disease in the eye that had remained sound. Under these circumstances he re-

solved to submit to an operation on the organ that had so long been obscured; and the cataract was so successfully broken up, that he was able to the day of his death to read and write, though not with his wonted ease. His mind retained to the last, not only its clearness and firmness, but its fresh interest in whatever claimed regard, and its large scope of cognizance and thought. He died after an illness of a single day, on the 11th of January, 1854, in the ninetieth year of his age.

What we have said indicates the high place which we are inclined to concede to Mr. Perkins as a man of talent, — we might almost say of genius; for the intuitive and constructive faculties which confer this latter title may be embodied in a voyage equally as in a romance, — may suggest a mercantile adventure as veritably as an epic poem, — may pervade a career of traffic no less than a life of learned ease or learned toil. In the subject of the memoir before us we perceive powers which would have made him a distinguished man in any walk of life. His prosperity was not fortuitous, but in the strictest sense of the word he was the *artificer* of his own fortune, which was the cumulative type and exponent of the depth of his insight and the keenness of his foresight. His success was inevitable, unless he had thrown away his opportunities by indolence, or crippled his ability by vice. His crowning merit was his generous use of what he could hardly have failed to win. Almost every public institution and charity of this city bears record of him as among its most liberal, and, it may be said with emphasis, its most timely benefactors. It was his wont not to cast his contribution in the full flow of the golden stream; but the outset of an enterprise, or some crisis of peculiar need, was the occasion of his bounty, which was also generally bestowed on terms which made it self-multiplying by constraining the liberality of others. Thus the donation of his mansion-house on Pearl Street to the Asylum for the Blind was accompanied with the judicious condition that fifty thousand dollars should be contributed by the public at large, — an endowment without which his own munificence, noble as it was, would have just sufficed to keep the institution poised between death and life. But his charity, never osten-

tatious, and publicly proclaimed only when it might stimulate generous emulation in others, was freely yet warily bestowed in less conspicuous ways. He was especially fond of aiding the industry and enterprise of deserving young men in his own profession, and was always ready to help with a strong hand those who manifested the capacity and will to help themselves.

Mr. Cary has fulfilled his charge as a biographer with the skill, taste, and judgment for which his name is a sufficient guaranty. He found the materials for the most part ready to his hand in Mr. Perkins's letters and journals, yet needing a connecting thread of continuous narrative, which he has gracefully supplied. The volume is beautiful in its typography and mechanical execution, and it certainly was fitting that this memorial of one who played so important a part in the business and the philanthropy of his time should first appear in a form which might distinguish it from the books that are expected to "perish with the using." But it is a biography which ought to be in the hands of every young merchant and merchant's clerk in the country. It presents in many important aspects a model character,—not only one that deserves to be, but one that can be, imitated. We therefore hope to see it republished in a lighter and less costly form, in which we are sure that it will find its way and accomplish its work in many circles in which the present edition will have little currency.

The sketch which Mr. Cary subsequently expanded into the Memoir under review, forms the first of Mr. Hunt's series of "Lives of American Merchants." The volume already issued contains twenty "Lives," with an "Introductory Essay" by George R. Russell, LL. D., of Boston, on "The Calling of the Merchant, its History and its Influence." The "Lives" are all of them written *con amore*, evidently in every instance with a strong appreciation of the claims of the subject on the public knowledge and general regard. Among the writers are several whose names are representative names in our national literature. We have not space for the analysis of the volume, which we had intended to give. We find that we could do it no justice, unless we characterized each separate biography ;

for if any were made the subject of comment, there is not one which would deserve to go unnoticed. We will therefore only say, that we are acquainted with no series of American or modern biographies that can be perused with as vivid interest as this will command with American readers, nor yet with any that better deserves to take its place by the side of those series which time and common consent have rendered classical.

- ART. XII.—1. *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, performed in the Years 1852, 1853, and 1854, by Order of the Government of the United States, under the Command of Commodore W. C. Perry, U. S. N. Compiled from the Original Notes and Journals of Commodore Perry, at his request, and under his supervision, by FRANCIS L. HAWKS, D. D.* With numerous illustrations. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1856. 8vo.
2. *Message of the President of the United States, transmitting a Report of the Secretary of the Navy, with the Correspondence, &c. relative to Japan.* Senate Executive Documents. 1854–55. No. 34.
3. *Message of the President, &c., with Documents serving to illustrate the Existing Relations between the United States and Japan.* Senate Executive Documents. 1851–52. No. 59.
4. *The Japan Expedition. Japan and Around the World.* By T. W. SPALDING. With eight illustrations in tint. New York: Redfield. 1855.
5. *Japan as it was and is.* By RICHARD HILDRETH, Author of “History of the United States,” etc. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, & Co. 1855.

ON the eastern coast of Asia, there is a country of about the size of Italy, of something of its long, boot-like shape, kicking with its toe one or two southern Sicilies, from which it is separated by straits, which have doubtless—for what has not?